

## MANDATES

## Tertiary education redesigned



Idris Jusoh delivering the Higher Education Ministry 2017 mandate.

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**E**DUCATION that is current, relevant and can translate academics into practical output is the message behind the 2017 mandate delivered by Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh in Putrajaya last week.

Themed Redesigning Higher Education, his speech outlined a follow-through and continuity of existing efforts that are designed to produce holistic graduates who are highly employable — resilient, innovative and are present and future-ready for the unpredictable job market.

And to have the education that is able to deliver all these, Idris said higher education institutions have to better understand the needs of students in relation to the current state of the world where technology is prevalent. Therefore, there is a need to change the concept of teaching and learning at the higher education level.

"Students today are not like students of old. They are able to learn by themselves. This is called heutagogy — self-directed learning. If students were mere recipients of knowledge previously, today they are co-curators of knowledge. We need to change the mindset of educators and have them rethink teaching and learning design at the tertiary level so that learning is more active, interactive, immersive, challenge-based and includes role-playing," he added.

To look into how technology can be harnessed to strengthen the delivery of education, Idris said Higher Education Ministry deputy secretary general (management) Datuk Kamel Mohamad has been appointed as its chief infor-

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DATUK SERI IDRIS JUSOH  
Higher Education Minister

mation officer to lead the initiative.

The ministry is also establishing the Reimagining and Redesigning Malaysian Higher Education Awards 2017 which will be headed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Professor of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning Datuk Dr Mohamed Amin Embi, the recipient of the Open Massive Open Online Courses Award from the Open Education Consortium in Poland last year.

"I urge all higher education institutes to set up an incentive mechanism for lecturers who are successful in introducing innovative teaching and learning. The teaching and learning process must be aligned with research initiatives," said Idris.

With regards to research, Idris declared 2017 as the year of "translational research", leveraging on the quadruple-helix concept where the government, academia, industry and community synergise to produce solutions to national and international issues.

"The ministry will prepare a Research Priority Roadmap 2017 that, among others, will comprise the Grand Challenge programme, focused on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), to be helmed by research universities. Under the roadmap, research will be translated to become more focused, valuable and relevant. It will promote research talents in the areas of SDG and the Fourth Industrial Revolution as well as position research at a global level in line with the Malaysia Higher Education Blueprint 2015-2025," added Idris.

He emphasised leveraging on collaborations, specifically the concept of collegiality and commonalities among higher education institutions with government agencies and industries to avoid working in silos.

2017  
INITIATIVES

- The appointment of a chief information officer for the Ministry of Higher Education
- Introduction of the Reimagining and Redesigning Malaysian Higher Education Awards 2017
- The preparation of the National STEM Action Plan with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation
- Introduction of gap year for students in eight public universities
- Translational research prioritised with launch of Research Priority Roadmap 2017
- Establishment of National Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Research Institute
- Establishment for Policy and Guidelines for Quality Assurance System for TVET
- To deliver the 100th Rumah Komuniti by community college students
- Introduction of Guidelines on Commonalities and Collegiality for collaboration between academia, government agencies and industry
- Introduction of summer semester for international students
- Credit transfer for summer semester
- Amendment to the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act 1996 (Act 555) to monitor and ease procedures for university staff recruitment
- Introduction of SETARA 2017 and MyQuest 2017 to gauge national education ratings

INFOGRAPHICS NST

Last year, partnerships were formed with the establishment of the South Klang Valley University Network which comprised UKM, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur, INTI University and Colleges, UniKL and Cyberjaya University College of Medical Sciences as well as a network of technical universities.

This year, the Guidelines on Commonalities and Collegiality will be published, with a focus on collaboration between public and private higher education institutions with government agencies and industries.

On campus beyond borders via Global Mobility Jukebox for university staff and students, Idris said: "In November last year, I launched the programme between Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Japan's University of Tsukuba. Through the concept of campus within campus, students and staff can pursue programmes run by the respective universities and their partners even though the campus is located abroad."

Through the University of Tsukuba, UTM students can pursue courses run by France's Universite de Bordeaux, Brazil's University of Sao Paulo, National Taiwan University and the University of California in the United States.

"The Jukebox concept is aligned with the concept of redesigning higher education through a flexible delivery system which I hope will expand this year."

In response to the popularity and success of Technical and Vocational Education in producing highly employable graduates, Idris said the ministry is committed to making it more mainstream and will continue to improve the quality of the programmes.